

Coastal Beach Inspection Program

2016 Summer Sampling

Annual Report



Prepared by:
Amanda McQuaid

Water Division
29 Hazen Drive, PO Box 95
Concord, NH 03302-0095
(603) 271-3503
www.des.nh.gov

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Clark Freise, Assistant Commissioner
Eugene J. Forbes, Water Division Director

2016 Public Bathing Beach Inspection Program: Coastal Beaches

The Public Bathing Beach Inspection Program is a federally funded program that provides resources for coastal beach research and monitoring. In 2016, NHDES inspected 16 coastal public swimming beaches during the swim season that runs from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Six beaches were inspected twice weekly and five were inspected weekly according to their tiered monitoring assessment (Table 1). Five beaches – Hampton Harbor, Sun Valley, Sawyer, Seabrook Town Beach and Northside Park (a.k.a., Plaice Cove) – were sampled every other week. Sampling frequency was reduced at Sawyer and Seabrook Town Beaches because the beaches were removed from the impaired waters list [305(b)/303(d) water quality report] by NHDES.

Staff members conducted 252 inspections and collected 899 samples for Enterococci analysis during the swim season. No off-season sampling was conducted in 2016. During the swim season, only six Enterococci samples exceeded the state standard, resulting in two coastal beach advisories. These advisories were issued for three days each at North Hampton Beach. The swim season in New Hampshire was 104 days long in 2016, which translates into 1,664 beach days for all 16 beaches. With six advisory days during the entire summer at coastal beaches, the frequency of swimming advisories was less than 0.4% in 2016 (Figure 1).

All 16 coastal beaches are accessible to the general public. All five state beaches have parking fees as do the beaches on Hampton and Seabrook Harbor. New Castle town beach charges all visitors an entrance fee. The remaining coastal beaches have parking areas for residents near the beach, but public parking is available in most areas of the coast.

Future efforts of the beach program will include maintaining monitoring efforts at coastal beaches and reviews of the tiered monitoring evaluation to ensure effective sampling is in place. Additionally, communication through new media methods will continue to inform the public how the beach program works, what it samples and what advisories indicate.

In preparation for the 2017 sampling season, NHDES Beach Program staff will continue to improve the tools implemented for the 2016 season:

1. Refinements of the beach advisory map searchable by advisory status:
https://www4.des.state.nh.us/WaterShed_BeachMaps/WaterShed_BeachMaps.aspx
2. Annual reports for each freshwater beach found through the OneStop data search: <http://www4.des.state.nh.us/DESONestop/BasicSearch.aspx>

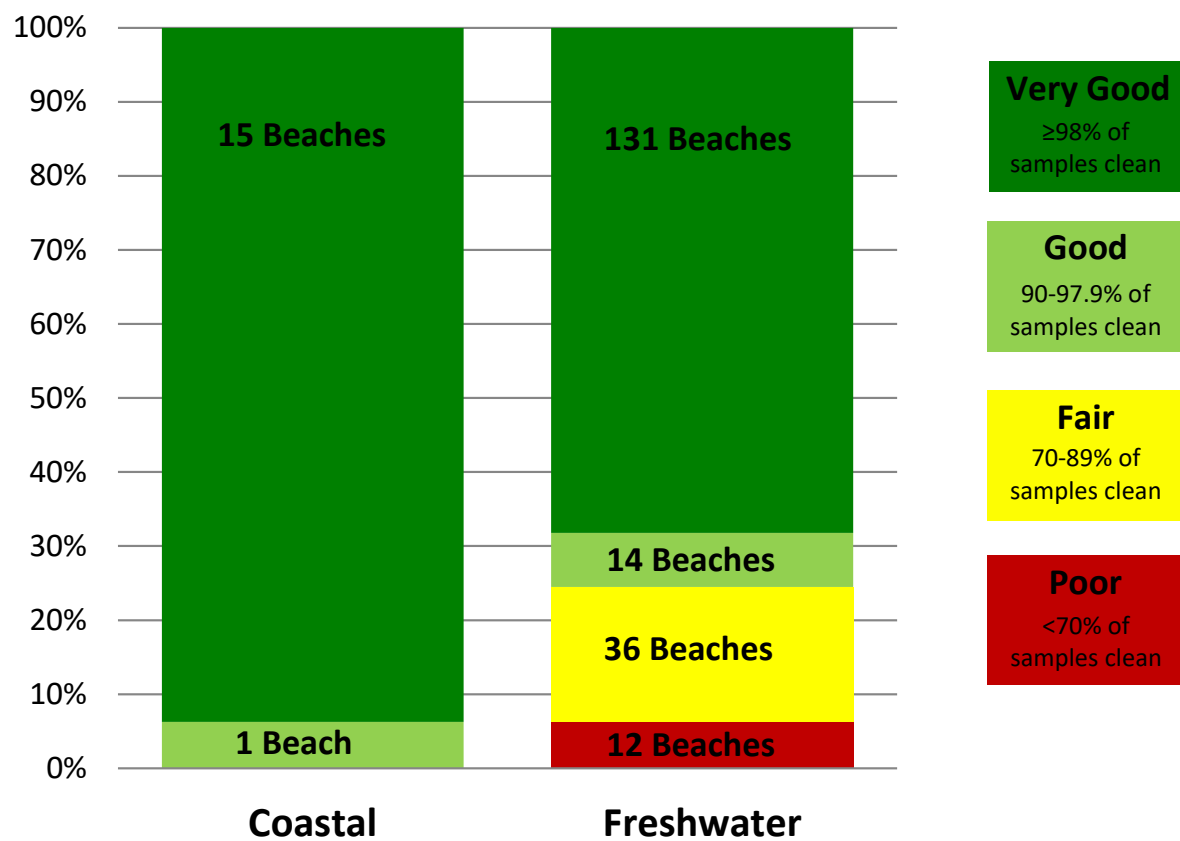


Figure 1. The number of clean samples was compared to the total number of samples tested for each beach (2003-current). During the summer, freshwater beaches are typically sampled once a month and most of the coastal beaches are sampled twice a week. All coastal beaches and most freshwater beaches in the New Hampshire assessment fall into the “Good” or “Very Good” categories, where beaches are clean > 90% of the time.

Table 1. 2016 Coastal Beach Locations and Sampling Frequency

Beach Name	Alternate Name	Town	Visits per week	Tier
Hampton Harbor Beach	–	Hampton	Every other week	3
Hampton Beach State Park	–	Hampton	2	1
North Beach State Park	–	Hampton	1	2
Northside Park	Plaice Cove	Hampton	Every other week	3
Sun Valley Beach	Part of Seabrook Town Beach	Hampton	Every other week	3
New Castle Town Beach	Great Island Common Beach	New Castle	2	1
Bass Beach	–	North Hampton	1	2
North Hampton State Beach	–	North Hampton	2	1
Foss Beach	–	Rye	Every other week	3
Jenness Beach at Cable Road	Cable Beach	Rye	2	1
Jenness Beach State Park	–	Rye	1	2
Sawyer Beach	–	Rye	Every other week	3
Wallis Sands Beach at Wallis Road	Pirates Cove Beach	Rye	2	1
Wallis Sands State Park	–	Rye	2	1
Seabrook Town Beach	–	Seabrook	Every other week	3
Seabrook Harbor Beach	–	Seabrook	1	1